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JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1995

Militants suffer a setback in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algeria's Islamic insurgents have suffered a severe setback after failing to prevent Thursday's presidential election but they still remain a potent threat to peace and stability in the country.

The mobilisation of 300,000 soldiers, police and auxiliary forces in a massive security operation prevented any major outbreak of violence in a country ravaged by almost four years of civil strife that has left more than 30,000 dead.

Voters deserted the Islamic opposition parties who had called for a boycott of the country's first multi-party presidential contest and defied armed militants who had threatened to kill anyone casting their ballot.

But even as Algerians were still celebrating the sweeping election victory of President Liamine Zeroual, politicians and the national press on Saturday began to express concern about how the militants would respond.

Two days after the voting, only a few isolated incidents, by Algerian standards, were reported in the national press.

Four Muslim militants were killed near a polling station at Tissameda, 100 kilometres southwest of Algiers; a homemade shell hit an election office in Tadmaït in the northeastern Kabylie region, and a gas canister bomb was disarmed in a hotel in the eastern city of Constantine.

However, the security operation that prevented any major attacks was scaled down this weekend: the many checkpoints were dismantled and the blanket guard on public buildings was lifted Friday.

Newspapers voiced concern that the two main militant organisations, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), the armed wing of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), would exact revenge.

"It cannot be ruled out that there will be actions after the withdrawal of security," the daily *La Tribune* warned Saturday.

"They are going to try to react and they want to punish those who voted," said a man in a working-class suburb of Algiers.

The two groups, who once effectively controlled large

parts of the country, have suffered so many setbacks in the past few months at the hands of the security forces that analysts see little chance of a military win for the militants.

Police and army have honed their anti-guerrilla techniques to perfection and the militants' operations in rural areas have been severely limited by the creation of communal guards and armed self-defence groups.

Still, however, the assassinations, ambushes of patrols and sabotage have continued and the militants have developed one tactic — car bombs — with spectacular effects that have masked their other military inadequacies.

The GIA, a loosely linked network of groups of young desperados from the working-class suburbs and mujahideen veterans of the Afghan war, formed around emirs or chiefs, is at its most powerful in the cities.

The AIS has more organised structure and is divided into three regions. It could be willing to give up the armed struggle if Mr. Zeroual is able to strike a peace deal with the FIS.

The runner-up in the presidential elections accused the government of "hijacking" the race in favour of Mr. Zeroual.

"Last December a plane was hijacked and now votes and ballot boxes were hijacked," Islamist leader Mahfoud Nahnah told supporters ion Algiers.

But he appealed to them to stay calm and maintain the peaceful policies of his legal Islamist group, Hamas.

"We will sleep comfortably while those who worked on misleading and cheating will get their punishment," he said to the chants of supporters: "Three million legitimate votes, seven million illegitimate votes."

Mr. Zeroual won more than 7.2 million votes to Mr. Nahnah's nearly 3 million votes.

Militants, waging war against the authorities, hijacked a French airliner last December which ended when French commandos stormed the jet killing the four hijackers.

Mr. Nahnah later told a news conference that the government must open a political dialogue with the country's opposition.

A UAE delegate said



ELECTION PREPARATIONS: A Palestinian boy shows a local teacher and European Union (EU) observers (back with hats) a family's home for voter registration in Jabalya camp in the Gaza Strip. A first group of 66 EU observers arrived in the Gaza Strip last week to supervise Palestinian self-rule elections scheduled to be held in January (see page one) (AFP photo)

UAE, Iran start new talks in Doha on dispute over islands

DOHA (Agencies) — Iranian and United Arab Emirates (UAE) officials held their first talks in three years here Saturday on their countries' dispute over three islands in the Gulf, the Qatari News Agency (ONA) said.

Qatar Foreign Minister Hamad Ben Jassem Ben Jaber Al Thani, whose country has been mediating for the past four months, took part in the meeting.

He called on the two sides "to work to find a common basis to resolve the conflict in the best way ... in order to ensure the stability and security of the region."

The minister was "confident that these discussions will lead to results serving the interests of both sides."

The islands dispute erupted in 1992 after the UAE accused Iran of trying to annex Abu Musa despite a 20-year-old arrangement to share administration with the emirate of Sharjah.

In 1994, the UAE suggested taking the dispute to the International Court of Justice in the Hague, which Iran rejected. The UAE's position is backed by its fellow Gulf Cooperation Council members — Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

Senior Foreign Ministry officials, Khalifa Shabani Al Murri for the UAE and Iran's Hussein Sadeqi, headed the two teams.

A UAE delegate said

further negotiations would take place at a more senior level.

The talks on the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb were the first since September 1992 when a session in Abu Dhabi broke up without agreement.

The Abu Dhabi round collapsed after Iran refused to discuss the Greater and Lesser Tunb which it has occupied since 1971, and which is claimed by the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah.

The UAE would try to get the Greater and Lesser Tunb on the agenda of the current round of negotiations, a source said.

The islands dispute erupted in 1992 after the UAE accused Iran of trying to annex Abu Musa despite a 20-year-old arrangement to share administration with the emirate of Sharjah.

No bilateral meetings were held on the dispute in the past three years because the UAE insisted that sovereignty over the islands should be on the agenda, but Iran said its sovereignty was non-negotiable and it was only willing to discuss "misunderstandings."

A source close to the negotiations told Reuters on Friday the meeting was arranged by the Qatari government. The two sides will "prepare an agenda for bilateral negotiations between the two countries with the objective of solving the dispute between them over the three islands," the source said.

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"This time we hope to achieve some breakthrough."

At the same time, the two sides will "try to reach a common understanding on the islands," the source said.

"We reaffirm the principle that a crime in the name of God is a heinous crime against God and a despicable desecration of His name," said Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Inter-Faith Appeal of Conscience Foundation.

Some orthodox groups also strongly denounced the killing.

"Violence and murder are anathema to our Torah's teachings, as they are to all civilised people. The moral leadership of the world must not tire in its efforts to eliminate fanaticism and extremism of any kind," said a statement from the Chabad-Lubavitch movement.

Rabbi Moshe Sherer, president of Agudath Israel of America, said: "No matter what a Jew's views may be about the current peace process or the sitting Israeli government, violence is not a Jewish option, and murder remains the ultimate sin against another person."

"Time and again we see leaders and members of religious groups incite aggression, fanaticism, hate and xenophobia — even inspire and legitimise violent and bloody conflicts. ... We are filled with disgust," the statement said.

In the immediate aftermath of the Rabin assassination, with the exception of some fringe-right groups, Jewish leaders from all branches of the faith condemned the act.

At one point, Mr. Heilman said, when a prominent rabbi said the killing of Mr. Rabin would be allowed under Jewish law, his peers did not take him to task and condemn him, but treated the statement as a matter of legitimate debate.

"You are kind of providing a theological basis for this kind of act," he said.

Rabbi Herbert Schaalmann of Chicago, a member of the board of trustees of the 1993 parliament of the world's religions, said it is unclear to what extend one can control fanatics.

"This is one of the enormous risks and the dark side of religious systems: that they are likely to breed the passion and the authoritative certainty of what is right and wrong," Mr. Schaalmann said.

He said the challenge now in Israel is to tone down the rhetoric, and for Jewish people all over the world to examine their own understandings of how God wants them live their lives.

"It's really in a very strange, but immediate sense a test for the soul of Israel," he said.

British destroyer visits Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — The missile destroyer HMS Cardiff sailed into Beirut on Saturday on the first goodwill visit by a British warship to Lebanon in nearly 30 years.

The four-day visit emphasises Britain's belief that Lebanon is back to normal after the 1975-90 civil war and it is time for British business to return to Beirut, embassy officials said.

Lebanon was the entertainment centre of the Middle East before the war, and the Cardiff's visit will be packed with fun for the 280 sailors, with a rugby match, a barbecue, rounds of golf, scuba diving and tastes of Beirut's throbbing nightlife.

Lebanese army troops stood guard on the quay as the Cardiff docked and Lebanese schoolchildren, journalists and other visitors poured on board past British sailors armed with automatic rifles.

The visit also demonstrates Britain's confidence in the Middle East peace process, British officials said.

"We are here to demonstrate to the Middle East and Lebanon that Britain sees the peace efforts in the Middle East as very important," Commander Nick Butler, captain of the Cardiff, told reporters.

British warships last entered Lebanese waters in 1984, at the height of the civil war, to evacuate British troops with a U.S.-French-British and Italian multinational force that failed to restore peace in Beirut.

The Royal Navy's last goodwill visit was in 1968 when a minesweeper paid a call on Beirut port, officials said.

"This is to demonstrate that we think Lebanon is back to normal and that we would like to see more British businessmen coming back to Beirut, a British embassy official said.

Lebanon is on a multi-billion-dollar reconstruction drive under billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri and embassy officials hope the Cardiff's visit will help persuade more British businesses to seek opportunities in Lebanon.

Assassin's claim of divine guidance anathema to religious leaders

NEW YORK (AP) — Few words could be more chilling to people who believe religion offers a pathway to peace than those of the confessed assassin of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin: God ordered me to do it.

The murder adds one more violent act to the atrocities committed in the name of religion, from Bosnia to Northern Ireland, from India to the Middle East.

If there are indications of hope in a growing interfaith movement for peace, Mr. Rabin's assassination is another sign of the difficulties people of faith face in stopping extremists within fundamentalist groups from invoking God's name in terrorist acts.

While there was nearly a universal condemnation of the killing, religious groups, particularly those on the far right, need to examine their own rhetoric to see whether they contributed to the climate of hate that made such an act possible, some obser-

vers say.

"A single condemnation is not going to be enough," University of New York sociology professor Samuel Heitman said of the orthodox response to the killing. "We have to talk about a different way of teaching about the value of human life."

Two years ago, at the parliament of the world's religions in Chicago, hundreds of religious leaders from all the major faiths signed a statement on their core value that came down hardest on the sins committed in the name of religion.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.

St. Simeon Church Tel. 661757.

Terracotta Church Tel. 622566.

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 632541.

Anglican Church Tel. 625226.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771351.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 77261.

St. Spiridon Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 652226.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 524228.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457.

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 81295.

Children's Programme — French —

Fruits Et Légumes —

Le Feu De La Terre — News in French —

Magazine — Sports Et Musique — News Headlines —

Nurses — Cinema — Cinemas —

The Bold and the Beautiful — Varieties —

Heartbeat — News in English —

Cassidy — Cassidy My Two Wives —

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Moderate weather conditions are expected to prevail with clouds appearing at different altitudes and winds northerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Min./Max. temp. —

Ammar — 8/20

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellies, Tel. 810740

Al-Raih — Isha

RIEF

Civil war

position based on
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Prince Abdullah inaugurates chlorine plant in Muwaqar

Muwaqar (Petra) — A JD 12 million plant for producing chlorine, a component for a variety of industries was formally inaugurated here by HRH Prince Abdullah.

The factory has an initial production capacity of 30,000 tonnes of various chlorine products, half of which is exported to Arab and foreign nations and earning the country nearly JD8 million annually, according to Mohammad Yousef Taher, the board chairman of the National Chlorine Industries Company.

ay which established the plant in cooperation with a German firm.

In an address at the inauguration ceremony, Mr. Taher said that the plant employs 150 Jordanian workers, technicians and engineers and bases its production on primary substances all produced in the Kingdom.

He said that the plant produces chlorine products which are important for sterilising drinking water for hygiene in homes and hospitals and for other industries like soap manufacturing.

Mr. Taher said that the plant produces 6,000 tonnes of sodium hydrochloride and 6,500 tonnes of caustic soda among other products and that table salt, which is abundant in Jordan, is used as a component for chlorine production.

Prince Abdullah, who stood in for His Majesty King Hussein, was accompanied by Minister of State Jamal Kheirisha and Minister of Labour Nader Abul Sha'er.

WHO praises move to iodise salt

By Samir Hijawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AZRAQ — A senior official of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Saturday praised Jordan for introducing a set of specifications requiring that iodine be added to table salt produced in Jordan.

Anna Vester, chief of the WHO's Middle East and North Africa section said this measure is due to the new specifications introduced by the Jordanian Institution for Standardisation and Metrology (JISM).

Mrs. Vester was speaking during a visit to the Azraq salt factory where she inspected the salt production processes in the company of Health Ministry officials.

The JISM early this year introduced the salt iodine specification, making it mandatory for all salt producers to add iodine to their salt product.

According to Health Ministry officials, a study con-

ducted by Dr. Sa'ad Hijazi and Dr. Ibrahim Khairi from the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) revealed that 37 per cent of Jordanian children suffer from iodine deficiency which adversely affect the brain and could lead to retardation.

Director of the Health Ministry's mother and child care department, Usama Badran said that iodine is being added to salt produced in Azraq under the health authorities' supervision.

The salt factory manager Ahmad Aqra'a said the addition of iodine had always been optional until the introduction of the new specifications.

Mrs. Vester said his factory had some difficulty in obtaining iodine because of its high cost but that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had provided the factory with the required amounts of iodine at reasonable prices.

In the next two months

the factory is expected to receive JD 1 million worth of new equipment needed for improving the quality of produced salt, Mr. Aqra'a said.

Mrs. Vester, who was accompanied by a group of experts taking part in a conference on iodine in Amman, said it was hoped that the conference will come up with solutions to issues related to iodine deficiency.

According to Dr. Badran the conference aims at spreading public awareness on iodine available in salt and the dangers to public health caused by its lack.

Jordanians consume nearly 40,000 tonnes of salt annually at the rate of five kilogrammes per capita, according to Dr. Badran.

The Azraq factory produces an annual 27,000 tonnes of salt while the Sabah factory near Amman and other smaller factories together produce 13,000 tonnes annually.

Police investigate Zarqa murder

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police Saturday were investigating the death of a 28-year-old man who was murdered Friday in a farm on the Berein Highway near Zarqa, confirmed sources said.

The source told the Jordan Times that the victim, Rida Abdul Wahab, an Egyptian national, was stabbed to death, and was possibly "sodomised."

The man was robbed of his belongings, and it is suspected that he was raped," the source told the Jordan Times.

Police contacted by the Jordan Times Saturday confirmed that a man was murdered Friday, but refused to

release any information and said that "they had no information to offer."

Meanwhile, also on Friday, three people including two children were killed in separate drowning incidents in Wadi Mujib and the northern Jordan Valley, according to police and Civil Defence Department (CDD) reports.

In the first incident, CDD frogmen Saturday retrieved the bodies of two children who drowned in the northern Jordan Valley Friday, CDD reports said.

The victims, Adnan Abdallah, 10, and his cousin Yousef Mahmoud, 14, were reported missing by Adnan's father after they failed to return home Friday evening.

The victim, Hisham Nabil Hashem, went swimming with two of his friends in Al Zara area, the reports said.

His friends, who were not identified in the report, told police that after a while they saw their friend Hisham waving for help before disappearing.

His body was retrieved by CDD frogmen hours after he was reported missing.

Electricity authority awards JD 34m sub-station contract to British firm

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Saturday awarded a JD 34 million contract to British Firm Rayroll Projects of the Rolls Royce group to build an electric 400/32 kilovolt sub-station in Aqaba.

The project entails building the new sub-station in Aqaba within the Aqaba Thermal Power Station location as part of the Jordanian-Egyptian power interconnection scheme to link the station's two steam turbines installed under Stage II of the Aqaba Thermal Power Station extension project, according to a JEA statement.

The statement also said that the project entails boosting the 132-kilovolt overhead transmission line between Aqaba and Amman to 400 kilovolts.

The construction of the sub-station is expected to be completed together with the other affiliated facilities by mid-1997.

The sub-station will be the first in Jordan with a 400-kilovolt capacity and will link with the national grid that runs through the Kingdom.

The financing of the sub-station project will come from a package of loans that Jordan has raised for the energy sector from the Japanese government, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, the JEA said.

The contract was signed by JEA Director General Mohammad Said Ararach and Don Sawyer, the Rayroll Projects marketing manager.

CONCERT

* Musical performance by the Czech Trio "In Modo Camerale" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8.00 p.m.

FILM

* "White Hunter, Black Heart" at the American Centre at 5.00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Annual fall exhibition "Khawater" at the Jordan River Designs, Jabal Amman (Tel. 613081/2) until Dec. 1.

* "Pakistani Women of Substance in paintings and photographs" at the

National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jebel Weibdeh.

* Exhibition of stamps about the Royal Hashemite family (1916-1995) at the Royal Cultural Centre.

* U.N. photo exhibition on the occasion of the U.N.'s 50th anniversary at Abdul Hamid Shoman Gallery, Jabal Amman through Nov. 23.

* Works by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Orfali Art Gallery.

* Works by Dodi Taba'a entitled "Variations Graphiques 93-95" at the French Cultural Centre.

MARKET PRICES rice in JD per kg	
700	500
600	400
500	300
400	200
300	100
200	50
100	20
50	10
20	5
10	2
5	1
1	0.5
0.5	0.2
0.2	0.1
0.1	0.05
0.05	0.02
0.02	0.01
0.01	0.005
0.005	0.002
0.002	0.001
0.001	0.0005
0.0005	0.0002
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Muslim rebels open fire near Kashmir's holiest mosque, 2 hurt

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Muslim militants opened fire near Kashmir's holiest Islamic shrine, the Hazratbal Mosque, Saturday to prevent rival guerrillas from entering the complex situated on the outskirts of this summer capital.

Police and witnesses said more than 30 men from Kashmir's leading separatist group, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), took up positions at bunkers and homes near the mosque to prevent the entry of a rival group.

"The JKLF men who were present in the houses around the Hazratbal prevented the renegade guerrillas from entering the shrine," said Reiaz Ahmad, a resident of the quarter which derives its name from the shrine.

"Both sides exchanged

fire for about 20 minutes before the guns fell silent," he said. "Then intermittent firing continued."

Professor Maqbool, spokesman of a splinter group of the JKLF which split recently, said his men had repulsed the onslaught by renegade militants.

"But we are sure they will come again," he said, adding that two JKLF members had been injured in the firefight.

Muslim sources identified the rival group of rebels as men led by Kuka Paray, who JKLF and others groups accuse of being an Indian agent and of trying to impede the rebels' fight against Indian rule.

Police officials, however, said the gunbattle started when they tried to cordon off the bus stand at Hazrat-

bal. "The cordon was later lifted," a spokesman said.

Kuka Paray has repeatedly threatened to take over Hazratbal, which Kashmiri Muslims believe houses hair from the beard of Prophet Mohammad.

He has also vowed to finish the powerful Hizbul Mujahideen rebel group.

Residents said senior police officials had been rushed to the area to prevent violence. Several residents fled their homes in panic and the nearby Kashmir University closed for the day.

On Sept. 29, dozens of JKLF men took over the white-marbled Hazratbal complex to foil a bid by Kuka Paray to storm the mosque and address the congregation.

Mr. Paray has vowed to

enter the shrine but Basharat Raza, head of the JKLF splinter group, has warned of a "fight to the finish" in such an event.

Muslim rebels occupied Hazratbal for 34 days in 1993, sparking an army siege. More than 12,000 people have died in the disputed northern state since 1989 when Muslim separatists stepped up a drive against Indian rule.

The Muslim rebel campaign in Kashmir has recently been dogged by infighting and factionalism with various groups demanding total independence, merger with Pakistan or a referendum for self-determination.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

Seoul prosecutors launch new round of probe over scandal

SEOUL (R) — South Korea Saturday banned two former aides to disgraced ex-President Roh Tae-Woo from leaving the country over suspicions that they were involved in the retired army general's slush fund scandal.

The two were Kim Chong-In, Mr. Roh's former chief secretary for economic affairs, and Lee Won-Joe, a former member of parliament and one of Mr. Roh's confidants, a prosecution official said.

"The travel ban has been imposed at the request of prosecutors probing into the slush fund scandal," the prosecution official said in a telephone interview.

Mr. Roh confessed last month that he amassed \$654 million during his 1988-93 term in office, and kept \$742 million after he left.

He was arrested Thursday on charges of receiving more than \$300 million in bribes from 30 business moguls and is currently being held in a cell in the Seoul Detention Centre, south of Seoul.

The prosecution official quoted senior prosecutor Ahn Kang-Min, leading the probe into the scandal, as saying that the two former aides would be called in early next week. The offi-

cial said prosecutors were trying to find the two men.

The official also quoted Mr. Ahn as saying that a senior executive of Hyundai Engineering and Construction, a subsidiary of the giant Hyundai Group, and the president of Dongbu Engineering and Construction, a unit of the Dongbu Group, would be called in for questioning. He did not elaborate.

"Summons of senior executives of big business conglomerates will continue and the chairmen of the conglomerates will be also re-summoned if necessary," Mr. Ahn was quoted as saying, apparently signalling the start of a fresh round of investigations into the case.

State prosecutors have questioned nearly 40 heads of the conglomerates, known as "chaebol," over whether they gave Mr. Roh money in return for lucrative contracts while the retired four-star general was in office.

Among the conglomerate chiefs were Chung Ju-Yung, founder of Hyundai, Dongbu Group Chairman Kim Joon-Ky, and the heads of other leading business groups.

The prosecution official said former Trade Minister Kum Jin-Ho, who is Mr.

Roh's relative by marriage and a ruling party lawmaker, would be summoned again soon for further questioning.

When he was first called in by prosecutors earlier this month, Mr. Kum confessed that he acted as a middleman to help the ex-president switch \$116.8 million from borrowed-name accounts into real-name accounts.

Mr. Roh became the first South Korean head of state, serving or retired, to be arrested. A survey released by a private pollster Saturday showed that more than 80 per cent of the 500 respondents named Mr. Roh as "the most loathsome politician" in the country.

Veteran opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung followed Mr. Roh with 13.8 per cent saying they hated him. Mr. Kim has admitted he received \$2.6 million from Mr. Roh around the 1992 presidential election won by President Kim Young-Sam.

Lee Hyun-Woo, Mr. Roh's former bodyguard who also ran the country's intelligence agency and later exposed Mr. Roh's slush fund, joined his one-time boss in prison Friday as prosecutors arrested him on several charges, including bribery.

S. Korea says Japan's rice aid to North has hampered unification

OSAKA, Japan (AFP) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam Saturday hit at Japan for providing emergency rice aid to North Korea, saying the move had "hampered" Korean unification.

Mr. Kim, in other comments at a summit here with Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, said he believed that shortages in North Korea were so severe he questioned whether the isolated Stalinist state would survive the winter.

The South Korean leader complained that North Korea had skilfully driven a wedge between Seoul and Tokyo.

"I have the impression that Japan's rice aid to North Korea seems to have hampered the unification of South Korea and North Korea," Mr. Kim said on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum here.

A second agreement was

signed on Oct. 3 in Beijing to provide an additional 200,000 tonnes, with the same very favourable payment terms as for the half of the June agreement: a 10-year grace period and repayment over 20 years at a rate of three per cent.

South Korea, meanwhile, has so far shipped out 150,000 tonnes of rice to North Korea under an agreement in June.

The rice issue, for South Korea, could become a valuable card, providing Seoul with a new channel of dialogue with Pyongyang as well as a potential economic lever.

According to North Korean officials who attended parallel negotiations with South Korea in Beijing in late Sept., 5.4 million people — one fifth of the country's population, have been affected by flooding, and losses are estimated at \$15 billion.

A second agreement was

signed on Oct. 3 in Beijing to provide an additional 200,000 tonnes, with the same very favourable payment terms as for the half of the June agreement: a 10-year grace period and repayment over 20 years at a rate of three per cent.

Installing the docking module — actually a 15-foot-long (5 metres) tunnel — was difficult because shuttle Commander Ken Cameron could not see the top of the tunnel during the final feet of the shuttle's approach.

After that, the shuttle made two giant loops around Mir — moving tail first — at a distance of

about 413 feet (125 metres). Atlantis' crew inspected and photographed Mir for an educational film.

Atlantis' voyage began with its launch Sunday from Kennedy Space Centre in Florida. The shuttle, in a delicate manoeuvre, docked with Mir early Wednesday, and the combined crews of the shuttle and Mir spent three days together.

Atlantis' eight-day voyage is the second of seven planned trips to the Russian space station. The work done on the voyages is seen as preparatory to the con-

Italian government shaken over immigration

ROME (R) — The government of Prime Minister Lamberto Dini was shaken Saturday as the federalist Northern League mulled the possibility of pulling out of parliament over a controversial immigration decree.

The bold threat by the League to pull its 118 senators and deputies out of both houses of parliament could wreck the passage of the vital 1996 budget and unleash a political storm that could bring down the government.

"Government on the brink over immigration decree," ran a headline in Milan's *Corriere Della Sera* newspaper.

Milan's *Il Giornale* newspaper said League leader Umberto Bossi wanted to "expel" Dini from government just as his party wanted to expel illegal immigrants.

The tempest began Friday night when the League abandoned the Senate during a vote on the budget to protest against what they said were signals that the decree would be too soft.

The decree, passed by the cabinet Thursday, was due to be made public after President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro signed it.

As debate on the budget resumed Saturday in Rome without League senators, the league's self-styled "parliament of the north" was meeting in the northern town of Mantua to decide whether to pull its MPs from parliament.

A full-scale walkout would upset the fragile majority. Mr. Dini's unselected technocrat government relies on, especially in the lower house, centre-right parties said it could mean the end of the government, installed in January.

Parliament could technically continue lawmaking without the League as long as a legal quorum exists during sessions. The budget could still survive with help from the opposition Freedom Alliance of former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

But political commentators said a withdrawal by the League would be unprecedented and create serious constitutional problems that could force early elections.

"These parliamentarians were elected to sit in parliament in Rome and if they don't the very credibility of parliament is at stake," one commentator said.

Mr. Dini, meanwhile, appealed to all political parties Saturday morning to get the deficit-cutting budget through parliament for the good of the country because the world's financial markets considered it vital for economic stability.

The Senate was due to approve the budget bill Sunday before passing it on to the Chamber of Deputies (lower house).



Members of a special anti-riot police unit take position in front of Athens' Polytechnic Institute after anarchists squatted in the building. Police clashed several times with anarchists during the annual protest march by students to mark the students uprising that led to the fall of the military dictatorship (AFP photo)

Anarchist students, prison riot stretch Greek police

ATHENS (R) — Greek police strove to control both a prison revolt entering its fifth day and a riot by young anarchists hurling petrol bombs to mark the anniversary of a 1973 student uprising.

Scores of riot police were

called from duty at the Korydallos Prison in the western outskirts of Athens to the centre of the Greek capital where youths barricaded themselves inside the Athens Polytechnic, wrecking the school.

Police said they arrested 13 youths. About 20 people choked by tear gas were rushed to hospital. Television showed a young man being beaten by police then being rushed off unconscious in an ambulance.

"Lives are in danger. Public property is being destroyed. Every democratic principle is violated," the Socialist government said in a statement, slamming Polytechnic administrators for not allowing riot police into the school.

Greek universities are protected by a sanctuary law which leaves police intervention there discretionary.

The riots began when the masked youths threw stones and dozens of petrol bombs at riot police deployed around the Athens Polytechnic, site of a bloody 1973 uprising against Greece's 1967-74 military dictatorship.

Prisoners hanged a foreign

prisoner and set his body ablaze Friday, the fourth

confirmed death among the inmates. At least 45 prisoners have been injured, either in fights or from drugs. Three Greek prisoners have died from drug overdoses.

Despite repeated govern-

ment assurances that the

revolt was ending, chaos has reigned. The prisoners have wrecked facilities, burned mattresses and bedding, seized drugs from the hospital and tried repeatedly to escape.

There has been a widespread settling of accounts with prisoners using screwdrivers and shards of glass as weapons. Numerous bloody brawls have erupted

between the Greek and foreign prisoners, especially the large group of Albanians.

"We're afraid the Albanians will attack us," shouted one Greek inmate. "They should take them out of here."

The revolt erupted when some inmates seized a guard during a failed escape attempt. More hostages were taken and the uprising spread. Three of the prison's four cell blocks are in

shock. The inmates released all their hostages Thursday but still want a list of demands met, ranging from better food and less crowding to removing foreigners and drug addicts.

Under cover of darkness Thursday, hundreds of prisoners rushed the main exits. Police fired live rounds into the air and dozens of tear gas canisters to stop a mass breakout.

Prisoners made two more escape attempts Friday, the last when about 80 young

prisoners made another break-out bid. Police drove them back by firing tear gas.

Korydallos Prison was designed to hold 400 inmates but now has more than 1,500. It has been criticised for lax security and since 1990 more than 150 prisoners have fled in five jailbreaks.

Cambodia prince placed under house arrest for murder plot

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Cambodian government

cussing this matter," he said.

Information Ministry spokesman Sieng Lapresse said security measures outside Hun Sen's house were stepped up Friday night because of the plot rumours.

Witnesses saw at least five tanks and two armoured cars and scores of soldiers outside the premier's home in central Phnom Penh late Friday night.

"Due to new evidence gathered from the investigation, the competent authorities have taken preventive measures by issuing orders for the house arrest on His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sirivudh," the spokesman said.

The short road leading past the prince's pink villa in Phnom Penh was closed off to vehicles and civilians with dozens of soldiers and police on guard.

A TV crew was forced to stop filming from a nearby roof and hand over the tape.

"The government is dis-

tributed and laws of the

kingdom."

A senior Information Ministry official said that Prince Sirivudh's fate was being discussed by King Sihanouk and the king's son, First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Prince Ranariddh heads the Funcinpec party but insiders say he has been angered at his uncle's questioning of party and government policies.

Prince Sirivudh quit the cabinet last year and opposed the May expulsion of former finance minister, Sam Rainsy, from the party.

"If he refuses to leave, he will be arrested," said National Police Chief Hok Lundi, adding that a government investigation into an alleged plot to kill Hun Sen had implicated the former foreign minister.

"The government is dis-

tributed and laws of the

kingdom."

"She says in this interview, by the way, that she does not want to divorce Charles," Ms. Walters said.

The BBC insisted that neither Ms. Walters nor ABC

Television had been briefed in advance of the screening Monday evening.

"ABC has not been briefed. As we have said before, only eight people in the BBC have seen the programme and nobody else has been told what is in it," a spokeswoman said.

The BBC however declined to comment specifically on the no-divorce claim.

Princess Diana, 34, separated from Prince Charles

for almost three years, is expected to use the interview to speak frankly about her family, her life with Prince Charles and her future plans.

She went ahead with the interview without consulting Buckingham Palace or even her own official advisers, causing fury in the ranks of the royal family.

Much of the British press is portraying it as Princess Diana's act of revenge against Prince Charles, who admitted in a lengthy television documentary last year that he had been unfaithful to his wife.

The BBC however decided to comment specifically on the no-divorce claim



Sri Lankan soldiers are seen putting camouflage on their tanks as they brace for what the military says will be the final and bloodiest assault to wrest the guerrilla-held Jaffna (AFP photo)

Chechenya heads for new clashes over election

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's rebel Chechenya region moved a step closer to a potentially explosive conflict when the Moscow-backed parliament gave the go-ahead Saturday for elections that separatists have vowed to disrupt.

The Supreme Soviet of Chechenya passed a resolution today on holding the republic's leadership elections on Dec. 17, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

The vote is scheduled for the same day as an election to the Russian parliament.

Chechen rebels, who see Russia as a foreign occupation power, immediately condemned the decision as illegal and provocative.

Rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev said the conflict could spread beyond the boundaries of the southern region.

"If Moscow decides to hold elections here, I fear the situation that develops will have an impact on elections in Moscow and

Russia," he told reporters in Urus-Martan, a town just south of the capital Grozny. "I would not recommend provoking developments that could assume monumental proportions in a matter of hours," he said. "This tinderbox could explode at any moment."

Dudayev spokesman Movladi Udgov said the Supreme Soviet decision was illegal.

"It is absurd because the Supreme Soviet was dissolved in 1991 and, even if attempts are being made to revive it, its official term expired in spring 1995," he told Reuters by telephone.

Mr. Udgov also accused Russian forces of launching tank and artillery attacks in the past 24 hours on the town of Achkhoi-Martan, about 40 kilometres southwest of Grozny. Two civilians were killed and seven wounded, he said.

"Russian tanks, artillery and multiple-launch missile systems fired 46 times at

villages and Chechen positions," he said. "The blockade of Achkhoi-Martan is continuing."

TASS quoted the Russian military press centre in Grozny as saying five Russian troops had been wounded since Friday in attacks that were especially aggressive in Western Chechenya.

"Rebels entrenched on the western outskirts of Achkhoi-Martan poured heavy mortar fire on troops," it said. "There have been 37 attacks on federal troops."

A well-informed military source told TASS that rebels were preparing to step up hostilities at the beginning of winter.

Russia sent troops into Chechenya almost a year ago to crush separatists loyal to Dzhokhar Dudayev who declared the southern region independent in 1991.

Tens of thousands of people have since been killed and many more have fled

their homes.

Fighting subsided in June when a fragile truce was agreed, but peace talks were derailed last month when a bomb blast almost killed Russian military Commander Anatoly Romanov.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, in an interview with the Nezavisimaya Gazeta newspaper, said Moscow's military campaign should be "carried out to the end".

But Mr. Grachev, who has frequently voiced doubts about prospects for reaching a negotiated settlement, added that he supported parallel peace negotiations, although he was not optimistic about their success.

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Positive signs

IF THE latest Israeli poll published Friday showing Prime Minister-designate Shimon Peres way ahead of his right-wing Likud rival Benjamin Netanyahu proves to be enduring, then the cause of peace in the Middle East is indeed strengthening in the aftermath of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. In the poll, Mr. Peres received 60 per cent support while Mr. Netanyahu obtained only 28 per cent. There are already many signs that the trend in favour of the Labour Party and its leader is growing. Last week, Mr. Peres was found to enjoy 54 per cent support from people questioned for a poll conducted by the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* compared with 23 per cent for Mr. Netanyahu. Only three months ago, Mr. Rabin and Mr. Netanyahu were neck and neck in the polls.

There is an apparent big swing in support of Labour politics on peace in the region after the Likud became the target of increasing criticism accusing it of contributing to the hate campaign against the late Mr. Rabin. With this wide support, Mr. Peres is well poised to form his new government without the need for grand coalition with the Likud. Israeli President Ezer Weizman has already made his views known on the composition of the new government when he said that Israel needs a government that is "as broad as possible because the greater the support the more able it will be to take courageous decisions." On the basis of current trends in Israel, however, Mr. Peres would have no difficulty commanding a broad public support without the inclusion in his government of parties that are lukewarm or opposed to peace with the Palestinians and the Syrians. In any case, the next prime minister would have to be directly elected at the 1996 national elections. The composition of the new government and its performance from now until the next elections will determine the future fortunes of Mr. Peres, his Labour Party and indeed the whole peace process.

Whatever goes on the Arab side will either strengthen or weaken the chances of Mr. Peres over the critical months ahead. If there were tangible movement on the Syrian front and a peace accord can be successfully negotiated with Damascus in the near future, then Labour and its leadership would widen public support.

Meanwhile, the concerned Arab governments themselves need to galvanise sufficient support for their peace efforts. It now seems necessary to periodically gauge public opinion in the Arab World on the issue of regional peace with Israel so that we too can stay in tune with the pulse of the people on this very important matter.

At the end, however, what could make or break the fortunes of peace in the area is the extent of its fairness and legitimacy. While the Arab side can contribute to the strengthening of the forces of peace within Israel, Israel too can play a critical role in mobilising stronger Arab support by becoming more flexible on the remaining negotiating tracks. The Palestinians have a lot to go before they can savor peace and the Syrians and Lebanese have barely started the long road towards peace. All these remaining fronts await solid movement before the forces of peace can sigh with relief.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

NOW THAT Lamine Zeroual has been elected as president of Algeria, his countrymen expect him to keep his promises and live up to expectations, said a columnist in *Al Ra'* Saturday. The Algerian people yearn to see their country stable once again, living in freedom, security and democracy and they expect their president to take speedy steps towards fulfilling their aspirations, said Mahmoud Rimawi. What is expected from Mr. Zeroual also is to pave the ground for parliamentary elections, which would enhance the foundations of democracy in the country, said the writer. To achieve this goal, said the writer, Mr. Zeroual is duty-bound to form a provisional government representing all factions and political groups to oversee the elections so that the people can be assured of the results and prevent any abuse of the democratic system. Mr. Zeroual has won 61 per cent of the votes while the moderate Islamic candidate Mahfouz Nahmeh won 25.39 per cent and both results seem to be very reasonable and acceptable to the electorate, whose turnout was estimated at nearly 75 per cent, said the writer.

MOHAMMAD DAOUD, a columnist in *Al Dostour*, criticised the Islamic movement for suing the editor of *Al Bilad* for alleged defamation of Islam. While admitting that some weeklies have crossed the red line, we believe the Islamic movement could have published a counter article in reply to *Al Bilad*'s reports or cartoon, or could have formally complained to the Jordan Press Association or the *Al Bilad* management demanding a halt to publication of material which could be regarded as anti-Islamic, said the writer. But by resorting to courts, the Islamic movement has opted for a practice which was exercised by the government against the local press and which the Islamists themselves had criticised as undemocratic, said the writer.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Why we stand to lose

IT IS only normal and expected for a small country like Jordan, to be subjected to various kinds of conspiracies and external pressures. What is not normal or expected is to see Jordan adopting these conspiracies and pressures as if they are long time Jordanian objectives that we have waited too long to see.

When a certain foreign power wants us to behave in some specific way, it is only wise and prudent to show a measure of reservation in order to receive a price or obtain a consideration for behaving in the manner we are required to behave. Instead, we find some from our own ranks, raise their voices demanding that we should go in the prescribed direction as if it was always a Jordanian objective.

This of course would weaken the position of Jordan, and deprive the country from the strength of bargaining and prevent it from reaping benefits.

Readers should note that so far I am not demanding the rejection of the foreign conspiracies or resisting the external pressures. That may be too much to realistically ask for. All that I aim at is to show some reluctance and hesitation, or at least to pretend to resist or, at bare minimum, keep our big mouths shut, until we get offered better conditions in return for submitting to pressures.

In this manner, we handled peace with Israel, which was sold to us by the victorious United States of America in the aftermath of the Gulf war. At the time, we rushed to announce that peace with Israel is after all a Jordanian objective for which we worked hard for 40 years and cannot wait any more. Thus we signed a peace treaty of charge, while others who preceded us obtained a price. We know now that others who will follow us will also obtain a price.

In the same manner we are currently dealing with the

issue of confederation with the Palestinian people, which is recommended to us by Israel and blessed by the Americans, as a final solution to close the Palestinian file at the expense of Jordan. We immediately announced that Jordanians and Palestinians are, after all, one family. In other words we will accept and take the Palestinian people on board while Israel claims the Palestinian land, including Jerusalem, and tell us in advance that the River Jordan is its security and strategic border.

That is also how we are dealing with the idea of a Middle East market, advocated by Shimon Peres and promoted by American think-tanks in Washington and Harvard University. Instead of presenting our conditions to join in, and go on board, our response to the idea was unequivocal: the new Middle East is a Jordanian strategic objective. We should work hard to achieve it.

That is also the way we are handling the issue of refugees and displaced Palestinians, whom Israel would like to see integrated in the societies and the economies of the host countries, especially Jordan, and whom American President Clinton advised us in his speech in Parliament to absorb, and the World Bank submitted reports on how to transform their camps into permanent Jordanian towns and villages at a cost as little as \$300 million. Our response was simply to regularise the Palestinian camps. They are Jordanian citizens after all.

I fear that the free trade area between Jordan and Israel will soon become a Jordanian priority that Benyamin-like arrangement between Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians may become a Jordanian not an American vision, and that the protection of intellectual property law will become an urgent Jordanian necessity to protect Jordanian technological inventions and Jordanian authors from foreign piracy.

Anti-discrimination laws

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST a person because of the region he/she comes from, his/her sex, his/her religion, his/her age, his/her weight, or even his/her colour of hair is harmful to society if it decreases the welfare of society as a whole. In other words, to discriminate is not inherently bad, however, it becomes destructive when it negatively affects the performance of a person or a group. Simply put, society should not care if you like a certain village and its people or not. What society should care about, and should hold the discrimination responsible for, is the decreased welfare of this group due to discrimination. The welfare of a society is a sum total of its individual's well-being: undermining a part of the whole will cause the system to malfunction.

How does the "round-heads" group counter the monopoly of the "square-heads"? They, out of self-preservation, counter by naming the "square-heads" as inferior and go into the non-government sector. In time, the "round-heads" eventually control the private sector and insist on hiring only their kinfolks and relatives (neopatrimony) and "Wasta" come in work here as well). Thus, society is polarised along the demarcation of "round-heads" and "square-heads". Thus, the public and private sectors add to their problems yet another problem which is lack of trust and respect between sectors. Who hurts from this? Everyone, especially those of the so-called "round-heads" whose skills and talents require of them to become employed in the public sector and those from the "square-heads" who likewise desire to enter the sector their group does not control, the private sector. These exceptionally talented workers become the focus of the discrimination and antagonism of the counter groups in their work environments. Therefore, they will tend to perform below their potential and if they stay in their jobs, they may not do as well as they would have had the work environment been less narrow-minded. Or, the very talented may end up changing professions and switching sectors to be within their own comfort zones: the reverse of "the right man/woman for the right job" occurs. Their performance in either case will be less than optimal and that is how the fibre of a market economy is shrunk and shredded.

People will continue to discriminate because it is economically beneficial to their group. Discrimination allows the group additional work opportunities as it shrinks the labour pool from which employees for a certain job are drawn. Discrimination is exclusion; that is, the pie is shared by the few, not the many. Discrimination means hypocrisy, and the cultural, social and economic impoverishment of our society.

A selfish shortsighted rational person (one who recognises only short-term personal benefits) will sacrifice the long-run well-being of the nation to maximise his/her personal short-term gains. Because of this maximisation process, the government must introduce laws that ban discrimination and enhance the effectiveness of these laws by banning nepotism which is the vehicle by which regional discrimination has flourished. Yes, the time is ripe for these civilised laws. Let's not wait too long.

LETTERS

The King's feats of humanity

Aqaba following his 60th birthday on Nov. 14. I am certain they acted in the best of faith and with the best of intentions. However, one would add at this point that they were nonetheless somewhat "out of touch" with His Majesty's perception of the notions of personal imagery and that of self-aggrandisement. We know for a fact that the latter simply has no place in the King's credo, whereas the former (i.e. personal imagery) vis-a-vis His Majesty pertains not to icon-building, but to an acknowledgment by citizens of Jordan that he is, always has been and forever will be "a man on their side". A man born to serve his people. That is surely not too much to ask, nor does it require too much reflective thinking to be convincing.

If we were to list the numerous personal qualities of His Majesty, we would, without doubt, find ourselves drafting a list of encyclopaedic proportions. Suffice it to say, however, that the King stands ever-tall in our minds and hearts; far taller and mightier than the lustre of bronze can ever depict. There is certainly no need for the erection of a bronze figure to remind us of that. We leave such matters to some of our neighbouring Arab countries which tend to deify their leaders. We in Jordan prefer simply to love our leader rather than deify him; to respect rather than fear; to voice our affection rather than spew up rhetoric. When a country and a people are so fortunate to have as their leader someone of the stature and qualities of King Hussein, then there is no need for dogma, rhetoric or demagoguery.

I have no doubt in my mind that those parties responsible for the conception and commissioning of the said statue acted out of deep devotion and admiration for our beloved Monarch. They had even planned to unveil it upon the King's return from

societal awareness and responsibility, etc. One has heard that a roughly equivalent sum of money was spent on the said statue. One ponders therefore whether that sum wouldn't have been better invested in education as well, following His Majesty's lead... or in some other equally worthy cause! Taxpayers' money should benefit taxpayers!

As for statues, there resides a statue of King Hussein in the heart and conscience of every loyal Jordanian; a statue of deep affection and respect. The experience of having King Hussein as our leader has engrained our lives and has been touching right down to the soul. And much as we are familiar with his human qualities, he still — after four decades — manages to catch us off guard and astound us with remarkable feats of humanity, gentleness, farsightedness, and wise judgement. I know I speak for the vast majority of Jordanians when I pay tribute to this great and gentle humanitarian, King Hussein. His is a legacy that will never dull with time.

It is legacy that is truly dignified and pragmatic, practical and spiritual, applicable yet sophisticated and far-reaching! It is a legacy of singularly unique affection between a leader and his people. There is no exaggeration when His Majesty describes our entity here as "our larger Jordanian family."

Mahmoud Izziddin Al Mufti,
Jabal Amman,
Amman.

nation

Amnesty International to convene Morocco seminar

RABAT (R) — Morocco said on Saturday it had invited Amnesty International to give a seminar on human rights in the country which the London-based group has criticised in the past.

"We invited senior members of Amnesty International to hold a seminar on ways of teaching human rights principles in future," Minister of Human Rights Mohamed Ziyane told Reuters.

The seminar, which will be organised at Rabat Institute of Judiciary Studies on Dec. 3-4, "is the first of its kind in Morocco and a proof of close cooperation between Moroccan government and Amnesty International," Mr. Ziyane said.

"Teaching human rights principles in Morocco is a sincere and credible long-term project," he said.

The amnesty delegation is expected to confer with Moroccan Prime Minister Abdal Latif Filali and the ministers of human rights, justice and interior on the situation of human rights in the country, an official source said.

Riyadh blast may hurt five-year Saudi plan

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A deadly bomb attack against U.S. military offices in Riyadh could hurt Saudi Arabia's sixth development plan by scaring off potential investors, Gulf economists said Saturday.

Though Saudi authorities sought to play down Monday's blast, experts said they believed it showed growing discontent within the opposition seeking to take advantage of an economic slowdown and reform-related price hikes.

"An explosion like this in the middle of the capital and the middle of the day could be a message to businessmen outside Saudi Arabia that the internal situation is not totally under control," a Gulf-based expert said.

"Fears by investors could ease in time but the occurrence of similar incidents will have a damaging effect on

capital inflow. This in turn will affect the five-year plan as it relies heavily on private investment," he added.

"There are also fears of attacks on foreign institutions in the kingdom and this poses another threat to the economy as they already have large investments there," the expert pointed out.

Saudi Arabia's 1995-1999 plan, announced this year, envisages an initial investment of 15.5 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) rising to 19 per cent later.

According to the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting, Saudi Arabia will need at least 472 billion Saudi riyals (\$125.8 billion) in investment through the plan to ensure economic recovery.

Nearly 40 per cent of the funds is forecast to come from the local and foreign

private sector.

The kingdom, the world's leading oil power, has agreed with the World Bank to encourage investment, mainly in the industrial sector, to lessen reliance on oil exports.

"Any shortage in private investment will have to be made up by the government, which is already suffering from cash problems due to low oil prices," a Riyadh-based economist told AFP.

"This means there will be more borrowing and another burden on the economy. Otherwise the plan could fail short of achieving its objectives," he said.

The sixth development plan dubbed a reform scheme is the most radical in Saudi Arabia's history, and was preceded by the appointment of reform-minded ministers in a major reshuffle ordered by King Fahd.

It aims for a deficit-free budget and an annual growth of 3.8 per cent in constant prices, far higher than growth rates in the previous plan.

Riyadh set such ambitious objectives although it foresees spending of \$40 billion a year, much lower than in previous years.

It was apparently banking on capital inflow into its restructured economy, a rise in petrol prices and an increase in exports of petrochemicals and other non-oil products.

Experts said the growth targets could not be attained if the investment targets were not achieved. They noted, growth was forecast at below one per cent in 1995 despite an improvement in crude prices over 1994.

Oil prices are expected to remain stable in the near future as the Saudis themselves say. With the sixth development plan projecting low spending, the deficit could be slashed but this could be at the expense of the economy in the absence of enough investment by the private sector," an economist said.

China accepts U.S. WTO plan, U.S. official says

OSAKA, Japan (R) — China has accepted a U.S. "road map" outlining what Beijing needs to do in order to join the newly established World Trade Organisation (WTO), a senior U.S. official said Saturday.

The "road map" was presented to China last week by the United States and charts a series of measures that it must take to overhaul its trade regime and conform with WTO standards.

"It is very clear that the Chinese have not had the opportunity to study the (road map) paper in detail," the official said after three hours of talks between U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor and Chinese Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Minister Wu Yi.

"But they have accepted it as the basis for accession to the WTO," he said. "China took the road map very seriously."

The 30-page document details how China can bring its trade regime "in compliance with international norms" in order to accede to the world trade body established earlier this year.

Beijing has said it wants to join the global trade forum, set up in January, as a developing nation, but Washington insisted that China's economy is too big to allow it to join on the favourable terms granted poorer nations.

Another U.S. official said, however, that such distinctions were no longer the heart of the matter. "We hopefully have left the... debate over labels behind and are focusing issue by issue," she said, adding that there was no deadline for when accession could take place.

"It will take as little or as long as it takes. We're serious about moving forward. The rest of it is up to China," she said. More talks on the issue will be held on Geneva in December.

Mr. Kantor and Mr. Wu met on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum's

meeting here, where the group's leaders are set to adopt a blueprint for achieving their goal of regional free trade in the next century.

The talks between Mr. Kantor and Mr. Wu, which also included bilateral issues, were "positive, direct, very constructive," the first U.S. official said.

He said discussions of bilateral matters — including a U.S. demand that Beijing step up its enforcement of last year's pact on intellectual property rights protection — also had a "very positive" tone.

But he added, "overall, we have a difficult row to hoe."

"My general impression is that the Chinese are willing to move forward," he said.

China has not told the United States what liberalisation steps Beijing plans to unveil on Sunday, when all 18 APEC members are expected to announce initial "down-payments" on the APEC trade liberalisation process.

A European diplomat said earlier Saturday that China would unveil an economic liberalisation package at APEC aimed at winning U.S. support for its entry into the WTO.

The diplomat said the package might include tariff cuts and an easing of restrictions on capital flows.

"It looks like quite an enticing package," the diplomat said. He said he did not have exact details of the package but quoted Chinese officials as saying that they hoped the package would be enough to gain U.S. backing for Beijing's bid to win WTO membership.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Morning boredom can be dispelled by the appearance of good friends and fellow associates and you can have a fine time together.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Avoid that self-engrossed fellow associate today and be with the persons you admire and have a good time together for you both to be prosperous.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Look for more interesting activities and forget dull duties which can await you, attention and perk up your spirit for the better.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Enjoy pleasures today with your mate and forget the amusements you have been planning later tonight to have with others.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get your health improved early this morning since later in the evening you can be with partners and get much accomplished. Study modern enterprises.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be careful and you avoid an early morning accident today and then you can plan career activities for several weeks ahead.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Try not to disturb your loved ones in any way in the morning today since later in the day and this evening you can all enjoy amusements together. Show thoughtfulness.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be gentle with any close associates in the morning today and later this evening you can have fun at home with your loved ones. Evening is best for entertaining.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A personal anxiety could cause you to make some errors, so postpone reaching decisions at this time and get good advice from close friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Avoid that demanding friend in the morning today, then later tonight plan how to make repairs to your property in order to make it beautiful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A home affair requires time and tact from you in the morning today, but after lunch, you can go after what you desire and get it.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Stay away from individuals whose ideas are radically different to your own and you will avoid disagreements. Do something special for mate.

Birdstone of November; Topaz — Tiger's Eye

APEC sees regional economy expanding 20% within five years

OSAKA, Japan (AFP) — The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum has unveiled its first medium-term outlook, projecting an average real annual growth rate of around 3.5 per cent over the next five years.

"In this scenario, the economy of the APEC region as a whole is projected to grow by a cumulative 20 per cent over the period," said the group's economic committee, formed last year and currently chaired by Canada.

The 18 members already account for half the world's output, led by the United States and Japan followed by

China, Canada, South Korea, Mexico, Australia, Taiwan and Indonesia. Combined gross national product was twice that of the European Union (EU) at \$13.3 trillion in 1993.

Growth among the industrialised members is expected to climb from 2.1 per cent annually around the beginning of the decade to 2.9 per cent towards the end.

Developing members "are expected to enjoy continued high growth" although their furious pace of economic expansion is forecast to slow from an average 6.9 per cent annually to 6.2 per cent, the

committee's annual report said.

"Industrialised economies which had low growth in the early 1990s expect to see a strengthening in their average rates of growth in the medium-term. On the other hand, the developing economies which have exhibited fairly high growth expect to maintain these relatively high growth rates," the report said.

"Inflation is, in general, expected to be held in check," the report added. "Overall, these medium-term economic outlooks project a

general continuation of strong growth performance into the future."

Over the longer term, APEC's economic committee warned of several problems including the ageing of society, lower domestic savings rates and limited scope for improving education and the quality of the workforce.

And as technology advances in developing economies, total factor productivity — the growth in production efficiency which is estimated to account for about a third of East Asia's economic growth — will slow down.

"When viewed in the medium-term, however, there is enough potential to sustain the strong growth performance in the region," the outlook said.

The report, coordinated by Japan's Economic Planning Agency, said last year's agreement by APEC leaders in Bogor to liberalise trade and investment over the next 25 years was crucial for maintaining economic growth.

"In the context of the APEC region, the most important contribution to increased competition comes from the deepening of interdependence, led by trade and investment," the medium-term outlook said.

"In this sense, implementation of the Bogor declaration and the realisation of free and open trade and investment in the APEC region is of vital importance to the sustained economic growth of the region," it added.

The report identified four main challenges for sustaining economic expansion including the seizure of growth opportunities such as broadening markets and introducing competition.

It also highlighted the need to secure growth potential by reforming financial systems, developing human resources and promoting technology transfers and development.

The other two challenges were identified as establishing the foundations of future growth — by broadening

infrastructure and promoting smaller businesses, for example — and securing a stable macroeconomic environment.

"A stable environment is also desirable in terms of implementing structural policies," the outlook said. "Accordingly, it is necessary to carry out macroeconomic policies from a medium-term perspective. Such macroeconomic policy management will also contribute by enhancing policy credibility."

APEC groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States.

Save water!
Every drop counts ...

UAE expects to join GATT before end of year

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) expects to join the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) before the end of 1995 after final differences are resolved, officials have said.

A ministerial committee charged with the GATT file discussed final measures which will qualify the UAE to become a full member of the Geneva-based GATT, which is now called the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

"We hope to finish all procedures to join GATT before the expiry of the deadline this year," the minister of state for financial and industrial

affairs, Ahmad Al Tayer, told journalists.

He did not elaborate but said they had reached what he called a general concept on customs tariffs and services.

"There is a full understanding by the key economic partners of the UAE on regulations concerning investment, services and capital transfer," he said, in reference to such partners as Japan, Europe and the United States.

The UAE has officially approved its application to join GATT.

But full membership has been blocked by disagreements with the world group

over restrictions on foreign investment and services such as banking, and subsidies to citizens in farming and other sectors.

Under UAE laws, foreign investors are allowed to own a maximum 49 per cent of any project while authorities have stopped issuing licences for new foreign banks on the grounds that the oil-rich Gulf country is already overbanked.

An agreement signed by more than 120 countries in Morocco last year creating WTO stipulated the creation of open borders in trade and services, and phasing out high subsidies to ensure fair market competition.

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasberg
GASBERGEN



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LEDER

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AFMEL

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ENIAMA

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TINIVE

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

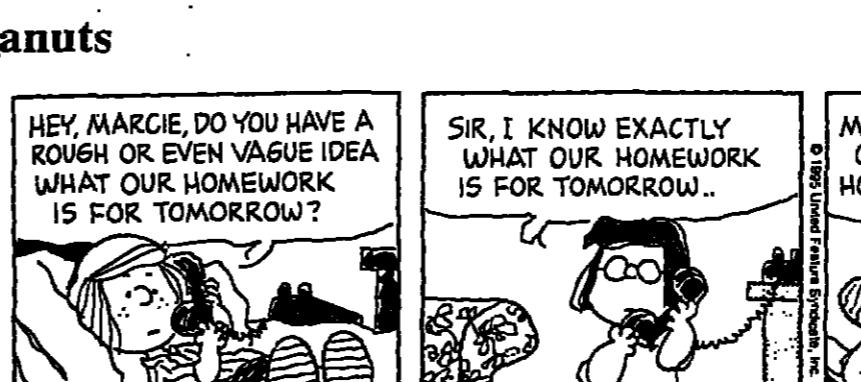
Answer here: THE

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumble: STUNG YOUTH LIKELY DUPLEX

Answer: How the busy salesman felt — TIED UP IN KNOTS

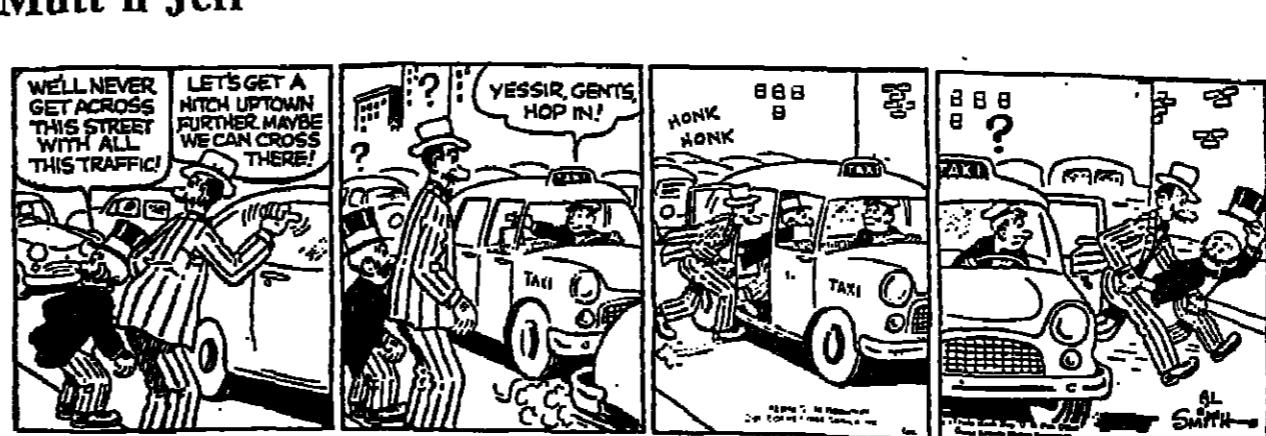
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n Jeff



Turkey signs \$1.3b power plant credit deals

ANKARA (R) — Turkey signed agreements on Saturday with five foreign finance institutions and 44 banks for loans totalling 1.85 billion marks (\$1.33 billion) to build a power plant and an irrigation dam.

"Turkey's energy needs are rising every passing year... we welcome the finance agreement of this project," Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said at a ceremony attended by Turkish ministers and officials from creditor institutions.

She said Birecik, the fourth such plant on the Euphrates River as part of a gigantic \$3-billion power and irrigation project known as GAP, was the first deal to be carried out under a scheme known as build-operate-transfer (BOT).

The scheme envisages that the plant be operated for 15 years by the builder, Birecik Company and later transferred to Turkey's state power utility TEAS.

The company will sell the power to be produced to TEAS on a price indexed to the German mark until it transfers operational rights to TEAS.

"From now on, big investments can be made in Turkey under the build-operate-transfer model," Ms. Ciller said.

Turkish Energy Minister Sinan Altiner told the audience Turkey's power demand would reach 130.4 billion kilowatt-hours (KWH) in 2000 from 78.3 billion KWH

in 1994.

"The BOT model creates resources for such big power projects," he said.

Together with the credits,

the company, a Turkey-registered multi-national partnership set up to build the Birecik power plant and dam in southeast Turkey, will have a total 2.262 billion marks (\$1.62 billion) to start off the construction work, its general manager, Yuksel Onaran earlier said.

With the deals Birecik obtained \$85.37 million marks from Germany's Hermes, 298.5 million marks from France's COFACE,

261.49 million marks from Belgian Ductone and 243.73 million marks from Austria's OKB export credit agencies.

It also secured a loan of 464.42 million marks from an international consortium of 44 banks. The terms of the facilities were not known.

The plant, which has an established capacity of 672 megawatts, will produce 2.5 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity a year and irrigate 70,000 hectares (17,300 acres) of land in the southeastern region of Gaziantep.

TEAS holds the highest stake in the Birecik company with 30 per cent.

The other shareholders are Turkish Gama Endustri with 18 per cent, German Holzmann Anlagen 16.9 per cent, Austria's Strabag Osterreich 8.4 per cent, French GEC Alsthom ACEC 6.8 per cent, Belgian Cegelec ACEC 3.1 per cent, French Cegelec 3.1

per cent, German Verbund-Plan 4.3 per cent and Sulzer-Hydro 3.7 per cent, French GEC Alsthom 3.7 per cent and Turkish TGT two per cent.

The plant, to be built near

the southeastern city of Sanliurfa, is envisaged to be completed within 66 months after the construction begins, originally planned to start when the financing accords are signed.

The construction work will employ some 2,000 people in Turkey's most economically backward region and about 150 people will work at the plant after it becomes operational.

BUSINESS DAILY BRIEF

A review of news from the Arabic press

Officials strive to convince people that dinar will not be devalued

LINKING THE Jordanian dinar to the U.S. dollar is better than keeping it linked to a basket of other currencies as the relationship between the dinar and the dollar is more important, Basel Jardaneh, the minister of finance, told Al Ra'i. What should also be taken into consideration, the minister said, is that 80 per cent of foreign currency deposits in Jordan are in U.S. dollars and that most of the imports are paid for in U.S. dollars. As such "when we decided to link the dinar to the dollar, we took in consideration the fact that economic activities in the Kingdom confirm that the relationship between the dinar and the dollar is the most important," Mr. Jardaneh added.

The minister stressed that fixing the exchange rate between the dinar and the dollar aims at emphasising that there will not be any devaluation on the dinar exchange rate. He noted that the difference in exchange rate at the parallel market ceased after fixing the dinar-dollar value.

Mr. Jardaneh pointed out that the fixing of the dinar value against the dollar would increase bank deposits in dinars and lower foreign currency deposits. The switch to the dinar will also be attractive as the interest rate on the Jordanian currency is higher than the interest rate on the U.S. dollar.

The minister said the fixing of the dinar-dollar exchange rate would be welcomed by foreign investors who prefer to see a clear and stable policy on the dinar exchange rate. He added that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) sees the current dinar exchange rate as appropriate and "is ready for further cooperation with Jordan to maintain this rate."

The minister noted that the balance of payments has greatly improved as Jordanian exports had risen by 26 per cent and income from tourism has doubled (Al Ra'i).

THE GOVERNOR of the Central Bank reaffirmed that the fixing of the dinar-dollar exchange rate does not carry any meaning of lower value. "It is a real exchange rate fixing measure that culminated a series of steps," the governor, Mohammad Nabulsi, said. He added that

this measure was assuring and has silenced any talk or rumour about a devaluation. Dr. Nabulsi said that a destructive attempt has been waged recently, without any justification, persisting that there will be a dinar devaluation although all facts point to nothing of the sort.

The Central Bank chief emphasised that there was no need to worry at all about a devaluation, which, he said, is rumoured by newspapers and the moneychanging market. He also dismissed talks that the IMF was seeking the devaluation of the dinar. "The fund itself was the one which openly called on Jordan for fixing the exchange rate and had no objection after being consulted on the subject," Dr. Nabulsi stressed.

About claims of liquidity shortage in the market and whether the Central Bank intends to raise interest rates, Dr. Nabulsi said: "According to the law, the Central Bank has one clear and specific duty and that is to protect the dinar and consolidate the monetary stability. To achieve this target, all effective means are open." He added that raising interest was the only effective means adopted by all countries to central credit. "We do not deny that the Central Bank was responsible for raising interest rates and that is part of the economic adjustment programme. It is the only means, and not an objective, to control credit," Dr. Nabulsi stressed.

He emphasised that controlling credit was very essential in the society because unconstrained credit expansion would lead to high liquidity in the market resulting in inflation and exhaustion of the Kingdom's foreign reserves. "Providing high liquidity to public and private sectors enables the society to buy foreign currency to meet consumable or investment requirements above its (society's) capabilities," Dr. Nabulsi explained.

As such, he said, by raising interest rates and by siphoning excess liquidity the Central Bank has ensured that banks were investing their funds in better ways and refraining from extending it on a wide-scale. Also, the measures indirectly served to prevent investors from switching into foreign currency accounts. (Al Aswad).

Japan's graduates face bleak job future

TOKYO (AFP) — Almost one in three Japanese students about to graduate still had not found a job, the highest level since the end of World War II and a result of the depressed economic climate, according to education ministry figures published Tuesday.

A total of 230,000 students due to receive their diplomas in March next year are still looking for work in a country where it is customary for future graduates to have secured the promise of a job in the preceding summer, or autumn at the latest.

The ministry said 69.8 per cent of university students had found a job by Oct. 1, a drop of 3.2 per cent compared with last year's already bad figures.

The ministry, cited by Kyodo news agency, said it illustrated the persistence of the "ice age," a phrase used to describe the difficulties facing Japan's youths on the job front.

The figures represent the fourth consecutive yearly drop. But it is the first time the level has fallen below 70 per cent since the end of the war.

Hardest hit, as last year, are girls. Only 61 per cent have found a job compared with 73.9 per cent of boys.

The ministry obtained its statistics in a survey of 62 universities.

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Cleveland wins first game

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Cleveland finally won one. Dan Majerle scored 21 points and Terrell Brandon '93 as the Cleveland Cavaliers became the last NBA team to get a win this season, a 114-82 pounding of the Philadelphia 76ers on Friday.

Danny Ferry scored 10 points in the third quarter as the Cavs outscored the Sixers 27-10 and avoided their worst start since the 1984-85 season, when they opened with nine straight losses. This year's Cavaliers lost their first seven games.

"We did everything right at the same time," Cleveland coach Mike Fratello said. "Some nights we shoot well and don't defend well, some nights it's just the opposite. Some nights we do all that and we don't rebound."

"Tonight we had a complete game. We shot well, we defended well, we got out on the open floor, scored in transition — that was the complete package."

Sharon Wright scored 17 points to lead the Sixers, who have lost three straight games, and 17 of 18 to the Cavaliers.

Six Cleveland players scored in double figures, including rookie Bobby Sura, who finished with a career-high 17 points.

The Cavs made 14-of-23 three-pointers (61 per cent), including 5-of-8 by Majerle.

"We needed this in a big way," Majerle said. "Everybody shot well, we were confident from the start and we played 48 minutes of basketball."

In Toronto, rookie Damon Stoudamire scored 20 points and handed out a career-high 13 assists as the expansion Raptors snapped a seven-game losing streak with a 114-96 rout of the hapless Minnesota Timberwolves.

Tracy Murray scored 19 points and Oliver Miller added 18 as the Raptors posted just their second win of the season and their first since the season-opener.

Minnesota dropped its fourth straight.

In Denver, Patrick Ewing scored 20 points and John Starks added 18 as the New York Knicks wrapped up their three-game road trip at 2-1 with a 103-94 victory over the Nuggets.

The Nuggets, who fell to 1-7, are in last place in the Midwest Division, a half-game behind the 1-6 Timberwolves.

Reggie Williams led the Nuggets with 27 points.

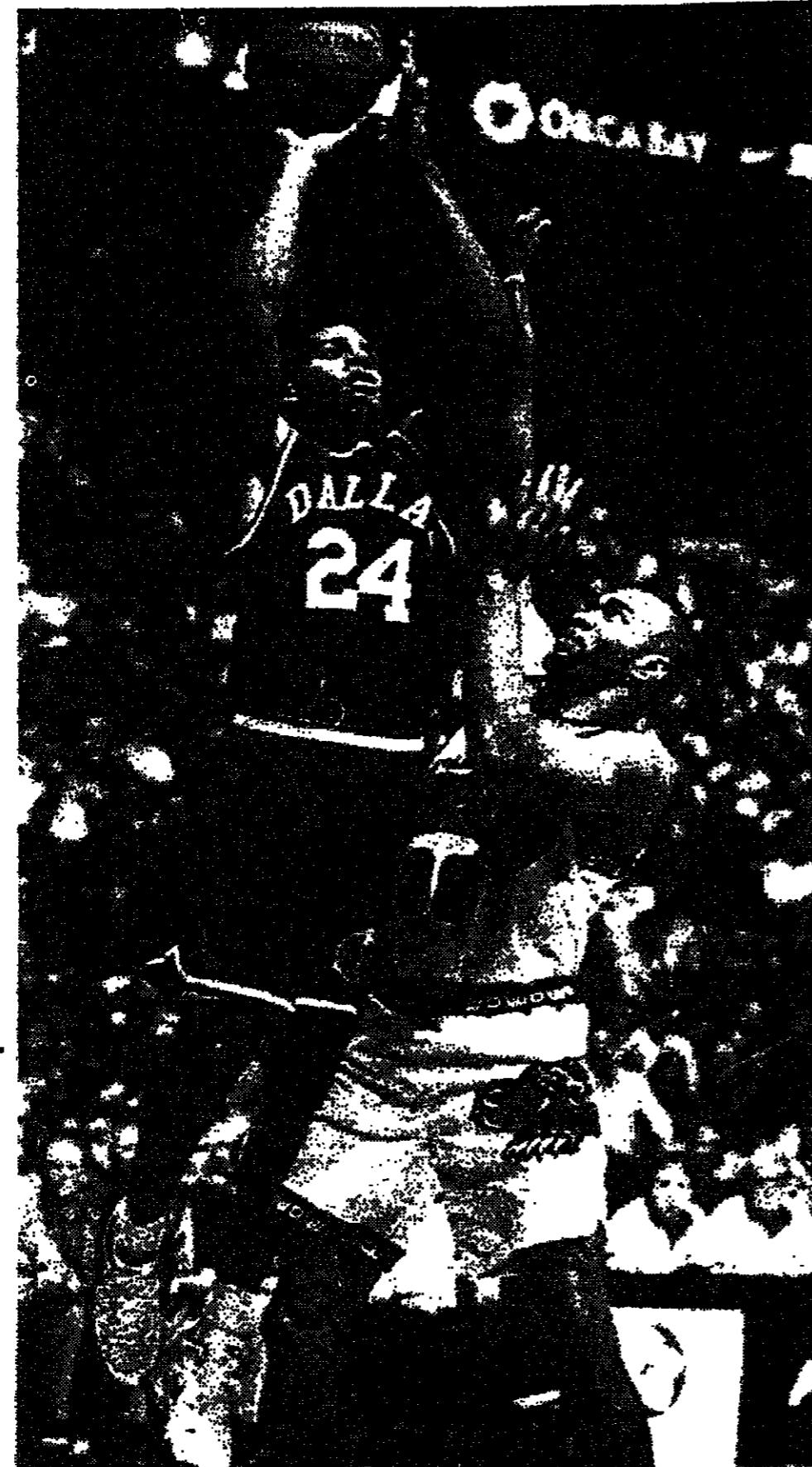
In Vancouver, Nick Van Exel scored 10 of his 25 points in a key third-quarter run and Cedric Ceballos added 17 as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the reeling Grizzlies 114-91 for their third straight win.

Greg Anthony scored 17 points and Kenny Garrison 16 for Vancouver, which lost its seventh straight after winning its first two.

In Sacramento, Brian Grant scored a season-high 24 points, six in the final five minutes, as the Kings remained atop the Pacific Division with a 105-95 win over the Phoenix Suns.

The Kings improved to 7-2 and remained a game ahead of Seattle. The Suns have lost two straight after a two-game winning streak.

Charles Barkley led Phoenix with 31 points and nine rebounds.



Dallas Mavericks' guard Jim Jackson (1.) goes up against Vancouver Grizzlies' guard Blue Edwards during their NBA game in Vancouver (Reuters photo)

In Charlotte, Gary Payton scored 19 points and Hersey Hawkins added 15 as the Seattle SuperSonics edged the Hornets 98-96.

Dietlef Schrempf added 14 points and Shawn Kemp had 13 points and 16 rebounds for the Sonics.

Dell Curry led Charlotte with 20 points and Glen Rice added 17 points and 11 rebounds.

In Los Angeles, Brian Williams scored 11 of his 28 points in the third quarter as the Clippers won their fifth

straight game, 101-90 over the Dallas Mavericks.

The Clippers have put together their first five-game winning streak since they won eight straight in 1981.

Jamal Mashburn scored 26 points for Dallas, which has lost three of four games since starting the season 4-0.

In Chicago, Toni Kukoc scored eight of his 19 points during a key third-quarter run to lead the Bulls to a 109-94 victory over the New Jersey Nets.

Michael Jordan and Scottie

Toronto	114	Minnesota	96
Miami	91	Atlanta	88
Boston	110	Washington	100
Seattle	98	Charlotte	96
Cleveland	114	Philadelphia	82
Utah	86	Detroit	81
Chicago	109	New Jersey	94
New York	103	Denver	94
L.A. Lakers	114	Vancouver	92
L.A. Clippers	101	Dallas	90
Sacramento	105	Phoenix	96

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Pippen each added 18 points for Chicago, which improved to 7-1 overall and 6-0 at home.

Jayson Williams and Vern Fleming each scored 14 points for New Jersey, which is winless in four road games this season.

At Detroit, John Stockton had 21 points and 10 assists as the Utah Jazz halted the Pistons' three-game winning streak with an 86-81 victory.

Jeff Hornacek had 20 points for the Jazz, who have won three straight and six of their last seven.

In Boston, Eric Montross scored 19 points and grabbed 12 rebounds as the Celtics snapped a two-game losing streak with a 110-100 victory over the Washington Bullets.

In Atlanta, Billy Owens scored 24 points and Alonzo Mourning added 23 and blocked seven shots as the Miami Heat defeated the Hawks 91-88.

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England into final after win over Egypt

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CAIRO (AFP) — England swept into the final of the world team squash championship here on Friday with an emphatic 3-0 victory over host Egypt.

England, who are bidding to win the title for the first time, fully capitalised on Wednesday's victory over holders Pakistan, which meant they won the group and got the easier semi-final draw.

The English believe they can upset both the higher ranked Pakistan and Australia, and on Friday's evidence looked as good as favourites Australia.

England omitted leading player Simon Parke to keep him fresh for Saturday's final and were still far too strong for Egypt.

Del Harris, the world open finalist in Nicosia six days before, needed only 37 minutes and conceded only seven points to the world number 18 Amir Wagh as he won 9-5, 9-2, 9-4.

Harris, a former world junior champion who at the age of 26 is enjoying a renaissance in his career, was breath taking with the speed at which he covered the court.

He also played more con-

5 more Malaysian footballers banned for life

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP)

— The football association of Malaysia's northern Kedah state has banned five players for life for matchfixing as officials stepped up bids to clean up Malaysian soccer.

News reports said Saturday Kedah's move followed a similar punishment unprecedentedly meted out on Wednesday by the national Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) on six players from eastern Sabah state.

"We are banning the five for life to serve as a deterrent to others and we don't want to have anything to do with people who have betrayed us and the profession," Kedah FA deputy president Ahmad Basri Akil was reported saying by the New Straits Times daily.

Former international Lee Kin Hong along with S. Thasagar, Lee Thean Ewe, Faridzuan Hamid and Norazam Ishak would also be banned from representing the state in any international tournaments as well, state football officials said.

The five were earlier this year suspended by the FAM after they admitted involvement in matchfixing in last year's Malaysia premier league.

They were members of the Kedah state team which won the premier league and Malaysia Cup titles in 1993.

"There is no way we can be lenient with the five because they had confessed to the police that they were involved with bookies. They should pay a heavy price for that," Basri said.

Consistently and more calmly than the previous day in the quarter-finals, when he was taken the full distance by Canada's Jonathan Power and given a code-of-conduct warning.

But Wagh, possibly with an eye on the bronze medal match which Egypt think they can win, was disappointingly error-prone and appeared to lack commitment.

Quite the opposite was true of world junior champion Ahmad Barada in the opening contest, which was noisy, marked by arguments and nearly saw an upset.

The youngster had two points to take a two-game lead against the world number seen Chris Walker before losing 6-9, 10-8, 9-1, 9-7.

Had he won either of them, Barada looked capable of getting on top of the Englishman, whose form is variable and whose temperament at the moment is inclined to be insecure.

Walker also had to be ordered several times to play on by the referee after contesting decisions.

In the third rubber, England's Mark Chaloner beat Ahmad Faizy 9-3, 9-6, 9-6.

NEW YORK (R) — Defending champion Gabriela Sabatini and world number two Conchita Martinez joined the upset-victims list on Friday at the \$2 million season-ending championships, now nearly bankrupt of seeded stars.

Natalia Zvereva of Belarus eliminated fifth-seeded fan favourite Sabatini 6-2, 5-7, 7-5 to the jeers of the Madison Square Garden crowd, while Dutchwoman Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, ranked 14th in the world, disposed of Martinez 7-5, 6-2.

The results left only one seeded player among the semifinalists — world number one Steffi Graf, who will take on 15th-ranked Zvereva. Schultz-McCarthy meets unseeded German Anke Huber in the afternoon's second semifinal.

The tour championships have never before had more than one unseeded semifinalist.

Sabatini and Zvereva waged a spirited duel that lasted two hours and 22 minutes. It ended, however, on a sour note as Sabatini stood frozen in disbelief over a disputed line call on a backhand drive on the fourth match point.

The crowd, which needed the match for shouting before and during points, booed lustily at seeing their darling deposed, and chair umpire Michael Morrissey beat a hasty retreat from his seat.

"He left just as I was about to shake his hand," said Zvereva. "I was shocked. I think he knew he was going to get booted (for not reversing the call) so he just got out of there."

Zvereva had surprised Sabatini with her confident play and the aggressiveness with which she charged the net. She rushed forward 66 times, winning 43 points in

the process.

"Nobody says anything about her game," said Sabatini, who won the affection of New York fans with two

season-ending championship titles and a U.S.-Open

triumph.

"But she is very talented. When she is on, she can beat anybody."

Sabati battled back from

2-5 down in the third set,

saving one match point in the

seventh game and two more

in a four-deuce eighth game

that gave her a break she used to draw level, eventually, at 5-5.

But Zvereva, who ousted

last year's runner-up, Lindsay Davenport, in her first

shorter field, four downs, and

scrapping rules requiring

each Canadian team to have

20 Canadian players.

south of the border.

The embattled U.S. own-

ers are expected to push for a

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Executive-legislative ties are exemplary – premier

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Saturday described the working relationship between the legislative and executive authorities as exemplary and marked by close cooperation.

Speaking to reporters during an inspection tour of the Parliament House which is undergoing refurbishing, the prime minister said that the government and Parliament were working in the "spirit of a united team" which has achieved great results from the extraordinary as well as the ordinary sessions.

"The close cooperation has reflected the soundness of the Jordanian democratic process which has been founded by His Majesty King Hussein," said the prime minister, who was accompanied on the tour by the speakers of the Senate and the Lower House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi and Sa'ed Hayel Srour respectively.

Referring to the start of Parliament's ordinary session in December, the prime

minister said that his government would pursue constructive cooperation with the legislative authority in a manner that would safeguard national interests.

In reply to a question by the press Sharif Zeid said that he did not read in King Hussein's last speech that there was a change in the government's position vis-a-vis the opposition. But he added: "I personally believe that the opposition should be 100 per cent Jordanian in orientation, formulating views from inside the Kingdom and practising opposition for the sake of serving the country."

Referring to the ongoing refurbishing process in Parliament, Sharif Zeid said he was happy with the progress of work.

Nathir Atiyat, Parliament's acting secretary general, told the press that a parliamentary committee co-chaired by the speakers of the two Houses of Parliament had been entrusted with proposing recommendations to the Ministry of Public Works and

Housing about the renovation work.

Mr. Atiyat said that several experts were involved in the work and modern equipment were installed to overcome the problem of unclear sound. Now the Parliament could seat 190 people on the main floor.

Also on Saturday the speaker of the Lower House received in his office editors of weeklies and political parties' papers to discuss ways for preventing excesses by tabloids which have been causing some problems.

The group, which is a follow-up committee to solve problems involving journalists' writings, discussed with Mr. Srour cooperation between editors and Parliament.

Mr. Srour said that Parliament was keen on pursuing dialogue and cooperating with all parties and the press.

The local press should seek to avoid any negative practices that might harm the nation, he said.

Arab leaders hail Zeroual's election as Algerian president

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Arab leaders on Saturday hailed the victory of Liamine Zeroual in Algeria's presidential election as a step towards resolving the blood conflict between the authorities and Islamic militants.

The secretary general of the Arab League, Esmat Abdul Meguid, said the election of Mr. Zeroual as president was a "step towards democracy."

"These elections are a step towards democracy that will allow the Algerian people to expect stability and security on their entire territory and to begin a new stage in their development," Dr. Abdul Meguid said, as quoted by the official Egyptian news agency MENA.

"The results of these elections and the massive voter turnout constitute the best response to terrorist forces trying to promote instability," said Dr. Abdul Meguid.

He said he sent a message of congratulations to Mr. Zeroual after the election results were announced.

"I hope to God that choosing you through direct, free elections would be a basic step toward taking Algeria out of its crisis," said King Hussein in a message sent to Mr. Zeroual published by the Jordan News Agency, Petra. "I also hope that Algeria will regain its shining role within the Arab order."

Crown Prince Hassan also sent a message saying the elections "drew world attention to your desire for democracy as a working agenda. It also serves as a path out of the crisis that has crippled Algeria's development."

"It is hoped now that the overwhelming majority of Algerians would put an end to extremism and violence," Prince Hassan said.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad said in a message to Mr. Zeroual: "I am confident you will succeed in guiding Algeria to security, stability

and progress with the support of the Algerian people."

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia also sent his congratulations, stressing the strong ties between his country and Algeria, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said in an interview carried on French television: "Now that there is a new president, Algeria's problems can be resolved by means of legislative elections."

The elections showed that Algeria wants to be healed while the big turnout despite threats from armed groups proves that Algerians want to see the light at the end of the tunnel."

The Gulf Times in Qatar and the Khaleej Times of the UAE said the poll demonstrated that Algerians did not support fundamentalist violence.

"The people will choose the reforms they want by means of elections, not by means of force," Mr. Mubarak said late Friday.

Mr. Zeroual also received messages from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan and Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani.

"It gives us pleasure, in our name and on behalf of the leadership and the people of Iraq, to present to you the warmest greetings and sincere fraternal blessings, praying to God the Almighty to help you to lead the sisterly Algerian people," a radio announcer said, reading the text of President Saddam's telegram.

President Saddam hoped that Mr. Zeroual's election would boost Algeria's "pan-Arab role in the service of our glorious Arab Nation."

Yemen's head of state Ali Abdullah Saleh telephoned him to wish his Algerian counterpart success.

Mr. Zeroual, the incumbent, won 61.34 per cent of the vote in Algeria's first free presidential elections on Thursday.

In the Gulf, official newspapers said the poll had legitimised Mr. Zeroual's rule and hoped it would end the country's three-year civil war which has cost between \$10,000 and \$10,000 lives.

"The election gave

Liamine Zeroual a constitutional legitimacy and a popular mandate, important and necessary conditions for reconstruction and legislative elections," the Saudi daily Al Madina said.

The elections showed that Algeria wants to be healed while the big turnout despite threats from armed groups proves that Algerians want to see the light at the end of the tunnel."

The Gulf Times in Qatar and the Khaleej Times of the UAE said the poll demonstrated that Algerians did not support fundamentalist violence.

"The people will choose the reforms they want by means of elections, not by means of force," Mr. Mubarak said late Friday.

Mr. Zeroual also received messages from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan and Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani.

"It gives us pleasure, in our name and on behalf of the leadership and the people of Iraq, to present to you the warmest greetings and sincere fraternal blessings, praying to God the Almighty to help you to lead the sisterly Algerian people," a radio announcer said, reading the text of President Saddam's telegram.

President Saddam hoped that Mr. Zeroual's election would boost Algeria's "pan-Arab role in the service of our glorious Arab Nation."

Yemen's head of state Ali Abdullah Saleh telephoned him to wish his Algerian counterpart success.

Mr. Zeroual, the incumbent, won 61.34 per cent of the vote in Algeria's first free presidential elections on Thursday.

In the Gulf, official newspapers said the poll had legitimised Mr. Zeroual's rule and hoped it would end the country's three-year civil war which has cost between \$10,000 and \$10,000 lives.

"The election gave

Lubbers says U.S. does not want leader as NATO chief

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Former Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers has hit out of U.S. rejection of his candidacy for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) top civilian post, saying Washington did not want a former premier to run the Western alliance, the Dutch news agency ANP reported Saturday.

Mr. Lubbers, whose candidacy to the post of NATO secretary general was withdrawn eight days ago following U.S. objections, said Washington's decision was motivated by the fact that as a head of government he could have proved more of an obstacle than the rubber-stamp that the U.S. government wants in Brussels.

NATO usually promotes to its top job former defence and foreign ministers used to implementing the decisions of others, and not former premiers used to taking decisions themselves. Mr. Lubbers was quoted by ANP as saying.

"I was surprised when (Dutch Foreign Minister Hans) van Mierlo asked me to present my candidacy," Mr. Lubbers said.

NATO usually appoints people "who are part of the circuit, who are familiar with

its organisation — defence or foreign ministers," the erstwhile premier said.

Mr. Lubbers said he finally agreed to put forward his candidacy after the Hague received encouraging signals from Washington.

But Washington pressured Mr. Lubbers to withdraw from the race after he had been strongly backed in Europe, leaving Denmark's Uffe Ellemann-Jensen as the only candidate.

Reports from Washington have said been vague on why Mr. Lubbers was rejected, suggesting either that Washington was not impressed by his management skills or that they opposed him over his support for a slower expansion of NATO into eastern Europe.

NATO has been unable to reach a consensus on the Danne because of French objections to his candidacy.

The Western alliance has been without a leader for almost a month since Willy Claes resigned Oct. 20 to fight allegations of corruption in his native Belgium.

However, Mr. Mubarak accused it last year of being behind militant violence, and a recent police crackdown has seen 81 Brothers brought before the military courts.

The Brotherhood was banned in 1954 but tolerated since the mid-1970s when it officially rejected the use of violence.

Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli added she hoped the French would not be so "small-minded as to

Housing about the renovation work.

Mr. Atiyat said that several experts were involved in the work and modern equipment were installed to overcome the problem of unclear sound. Now the Parliament could seat 190 people on the main floor.

Also on Saturday the speaker of the Lower House received in his office editors of weeklies and political parties' papers to discuss ways for preventing excesses by tabloids which have been causing some problems.

The group, which is a follow-up committee to solve problems involving journalists' writings, discussed with Mr. Srour cooperation between editors and Parliament.

Mr. Srour said that Parliament was keen on pursuing dialogue and cooperating with all parties and the press.

The local press should seek to avoid any negative practices that might harm the nation, he said.

Receiving Saturday a delegation representing the Royal Dutch Air



Ahmad Lawzi

Lawzi's term is renewed

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Saturday extending the mandate of Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi for two more years as of Nov. 23, 1995. Mr. Lawzi's current mandate started on Nov. 23, 1993.

Regent visits GHQ



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Saturday visited the General Headquarters and met with the chairman of the joint chiefs-of-staff. General Abdul Hafez Mirai, and his assistants to discuss issues of concern to the Armed Forces.

The Regent also received Saturday a delegation representing the Royal Dutch Air

Force and reviewed developments in the Middle East peace process.

League chief to meet Chirac on Jerusalem

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid will meet French President Jacques Chirac to discuss the U.S. Congress decision to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, league officials said Saturday.

Mr. Abdul Meguid will leave for Barcelona, Spain, on Nov. 26 for a three-day stay to head a league observer delegation at a European-Mediterranean conference there, an official from the pan-Arab body said.

He will then go on to Paris for another three days to meet Mr. Chirac and Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette, the official said.

The talks will focus on "issues of common interest," particularly the U.S. Congress decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem by 1999, which the league has condemned.

They will also discuss "the situation in the Middle East," especially U.N. sanctions slapped on Libya for its refusal to hand over two suspects in the 1988 bombing of a jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, which left 270 dead.

France, Britain and the United States have been the main supporters of continuing the embargo on Tripoli.

Dr. Abdul Meguid has been conducting "intense contacts" with the United Nations, the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) to gather support against the U.S. Congress decision, a league spokesman said.

The contacts are aimed at finding "the most appropriate way to respond to the decision, especially since the topic of the Palestinians and Jerusalem will be put before the U.N. General Assembly on Nov. 29," Talaat Hamed told the press.

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GCC stand

A senior Gulf official said on Friday the vote by the U.S. Congress to move its embassy to Jerusalem could block economic normalisation with the Jewish state.

"It is not wise now to talk about ending the boycott," said Sheikh Fahim Al Qassimi, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

"This is incompatible with recent positions which deny Arab and Muslim feelings, on top of which is the U.S. Congress decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem by 1999 and Israel's insistence on its attitude that Jerusalem is its eternal capital."

Belgium also sought to limit the damage.

In an interview with Belgian television RTBF, Mr. Dehaene refused to speak of division, stressing instead that agreement within the EU on a future treaty banning nuclear tests was much more important than any current niggling.

He claimed there was no "personal friction" between him and the French president.

On Saturday Italian politicians and the press were divided on who was to blame for the Franco-Italian conflict, with several arguing the Italian government should not have backed the U.N. anti-nuclear resolution.

Mr. Qassimi, interviewed by the official UAE news agency WAM, said the U.S. vote last month and Israeli claim of Jerusalem contravened international resolutions and the autonomy agreement with Palestinians.

Talibans launch major assault against Kabul, claim advances

took place 30 kilometres from the capital — was repelled Saturday by troops loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani in a counter-offensive, the Defense Ministry said.

But the Talibans claimed making an advance in their two-pronged thrust and an Afghan information agency based in Pakistan said the militia had gained some 10 kilometres in fighting since Friday.

The government won back lost ground and pushed back the "religious students" by a further three kilometres, the ministry said.

Last Saturday, Afghan Press (AIP), based in Pakistan with wireless contacts inside Afghanistan, said the Talibans had taken at least 15 villages during the fighting since Friday.

Meanwhile, at least four civilians were killed Saturday and nine injured when a rocket barrage — which the military said was fired from Taliban positions around Kabul — slammed into a crowded bazaar in the city centre, the defense ministry said.

The strike struck the market during a peak shopping hour when the area was thronging with men, women and children.

The Talibans used 1,000 men, 15 tanks, missiles, rockets and heavy artillery to seize an eight-kilometre area southeast of the already besieged Afghan capital, in an attack launched late Thursday, defense and military officials here said.

By late Saturday, heavy fighting had continued in the area for nearly 48 hours since

France isolated after cancelling key European meetings over nuclear row

PARIS (AFP) — French President Jacques Chirac on Saturday faced growing isolation after he took the drastic step of cancelling high-level meetings with key European partners who opposed his nuclear testing programme.

Ennemy aroused by Mr. Chirac's petulant cancellation of a long-planned summit with Italian Prime Minister Lamberto Dini and a lunch meeting with Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene in Paris could paralyse the European Union (EU), the diplomats said. Both meetings were scheduled for next week.

"If France does not rapidly resolve its conflicts, especially with Italy, that could paralyse the European Union when this country (Italy) takes on the presidency in January," a diplomat said Saturday in Brussels.

Following the announcement Friday, Mr. Dini expressed "extreme regret" at the cancellation of the summit.

Mr. Chirac embarked on a controversial series of nuclear tests in the South Pacific in September, with a fourth test expected soon.

The president has already expressed annoyance with anti-nuclear countries such as Austria, Denmark and